

Minutes from the Individual Sewage Disposal System (ISDS) Task Force Meeting August 21, 2000

The ISDS Task Force began on Monday, August 21, 2000. Tom Getz chaired the meeting, which he opened with introduction of attendees. He explained that the Department's objective is to review this program along with other DEM regulatory programs for improvements that could be attained through program administrative, policy and regulatory or possibly statutory changes.

Tom explained that he had communicated with environmental groups, municipalities and others who are impacted by the ISDS program to seek their recommendations for program improvement. These recommendations were compiled with recommendations made by the Governors Advisory Commission and DEM's consultants, KPMG, which have previously been received by the Department. These recommendations were then categorized as administrative, policy, regulatory or statutory changes and were presented in the Draft ISDS Report dated August 8, 2000, which was prepared and distributed for this meeting.

The process by which the Task Force will work was described: subgroups (workgroups) will meet independent of the Task Force and will focus on specific issues. Each of the workgroups will investigate the issues of concern and recommend actions to resolve these issues.

Tom gave a broad review of the Draft ISDS Report. He called attention to large sheets of paper mounted to the wall, enlargements of the issues matrices from the draft ISDS Report. Tom indicated that he had placed a check mark next to recommendations which will be part of the rule change which must be promulgated this winter to take effect by January 19, 2001.

Discussion of the Report led to the following additional recommendations for proposed policy changes:

- DEM to coordinate with Municipalities and Wastewater Management Districts to promote better management of septic waste and help in the development of Wastewater Management Districts. DEM should develop a liaison or advocacy program to help towns with ISDS policy issues. This program could include Department of Health and/or the Department of Administration.
- Coordination between DEM and municipalities regarding systems which are appropriate with regard to sensitive areas of each town and to ensure that homeowners who renovate their homes include as part of the project a septic system which is adequate for the new home design. (This was added to the matrix as Review DEM permitting policies.)
- Better coordination with DEM and Municipalities to ensure that municipalities' requirements are met.
- DEM should coordinate with CRMC on ISDS, nitrogen standards and sensitive resource area issues.
- Continuing education should be required for the private sector.
- Improve training opportunities for designers on proprietary devices.
- Add a staff person to deal with Innovative and Alternative systems issues.

Prioritization of Issues

The issues that were presented in the Draft ISDS Report and the additional issues, which were suggested by attendees at the meeting, were prioritized by non-DEM attendees. Attendees were given eight dots to place next to issues that they consider to be a priority.

The next meetings were scheduled for September 14, 2000 at 10:00 AM and October 3, 2000 at 2:00 PM. Meeting notes will be distributed prior to the meeting.